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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3936
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 0526
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 9317
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 3931
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1412
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 3104
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 6418
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 4027
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA 0534
RUEHCN/AMCONSUL CHENGDU 0524
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 2468
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0142
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 RANGOON 000073

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/12/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [BM](#)

SUBJECT: JAPAN QUIETLY NUDGES BURMA

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Classified By: CDA Shari Villarosa for Reasons 1.4 (b,d)

11. (C) Summary: Hideaki Mizukoshi, Director of Southeast Asia in Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, told Charge that he urged the GOB to activate a dialogue with the international community and start talking with Aung San Suu Kyi. He told the GOB that Burma's lack of progress on democracy and unwillingness to engage in dialogue made it more difficult for Japan to play a mediating role to ease tensions between Burma and the international community. Mizukoshi told the GOB that they must take visible steps, including accepting a visit by Malaysian Foreign Minister Hamid and admitting a new special UN envoy, to avoid further problems. Japan has no specific candidate in mind for the vacant UN envoy position, but prefers that it be someone who would choose to work quietly, not publicly. Japan also urged the U.S. to engage India and China to elicit their support for democratization in Burma. End Summary.

Japan Urges Burma to Reengage the International Community

12. (C) Hideaki Mizukoshi, Director of the Japanese Foreign Ministry's Southeast Asia Division for Mainland Southeast Asia, called on Charge on January 16 to discuss his just-completed meeting with U Nyan Lynn, the MFA Director General for Political Affairs at Burma's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Mizukoshi said he explained to the DG that international criticism of Burma has increased, and that Japan, as a friend, has always tried to ease the tension between Burma and the rest of the world. The situation has become more difficult this year because of international frustration with the continuing delay in Burma's democratization process and the lack of visible results from the National Convention. Mizukoshi added that the UN Special Envoy to Burma had previously enjoyed regular access to the country and that Burmese officials had attended meetings under the Bangkok process, but dialogue with the

international community had effectively ceased.

13. (C) Mizukoshi told the Charge his goal was to get the GOB to reactivate a dialogue with the international community, especially a new UN special envoy, and begin a dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi and release her from house arrest. Mizukoshi said he stressed to the GOB that Japan is a good friend of Burma and needs to see progress to explain the situation to the international community. As evidence that the regime listens to Japan, Mizukoshi claimed that the GOJ "helped influence the GOB decision" to not withdraw from the ILO, and had "persuaded Burma to accept" the December UNSC briefing. Mizukoshi also claimed that the GOJ "told China not to reject the Security Council briefing."

14. (C) Mizukoshi said that the DG acknowledged the increase in international criticism, recognized Japan's role as a valued friend, and agreed that the pending visit of Malaysian FM Syed Hamid was very important to Burma's relations with ASEAN. The DG said he would pass Japan's message to the Foreign Minister. The Charge told Mizukoshi that people will watch closely how receptive the GOB is to Hamid's visit and his request to see Aung San Suu Kyi, and will also want to see serious discussion about democratic reforms. She said that the GOB must allow the ethnic minorities to have greater representation in the government if they wish to keep the country unified, and noted, as an example, that no ethnic Kachin serve in the administration of Kachin State. Mizukoshi agreed that the GOB cites its problems with minorities to explain its delays in democratization, and said that Japan has repeatedly told the GOB to engage the groups.

New UN Envoy Should Practice "Quiet" Diplomacy

15. (C) Starting a new relationship with the UN will be a challenge, Mizukoshi admitted. He said Burma must begin by

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openly accepting a new UN Special Envoy. He asked if the U.S. had anyone in mind. The Charge replied that the U.S. wanted the envoy to be a forceful advocate for democracy, openness, and human rights in Burma. Japan had no particular candidate in mind either, but believed the person selected "should engage in quiet diplomacy until he gets results; otherwise it will create confusion." Acknowledging that former UN envoy Razali Ismail's business dealings in Burma had raised some doubts, Mizukoshi said the new envoy should be neutral, without past ties to Burma and should not be under the influence of any single country.

Engaging the Neighbors

16. (C) Mizukoshi offered the opinion that China is interested in expanding its influence in Burma, not democracy. Noting that China supplies weapons to the GOB, he said that China's Burma policy takes a different direction from the rest of the international community. The Charge responded that China has extensive commercial dealings in Burma, as do Thailand and Singapore, but that China also has political concerns about the current direction in Burma. China may not actively promote democracy, but it recognizes that the current system is not stable, and claims it also quietly urges reform, she added. Mizukoshi urged the U.S. to encourage China to go along with international efforts to support democracy. Mizukoshi wished us luck with our efforts in China, but declared his lack of optimism.

17. (C) The Charge and Mizukoshi welcomed ASEAN's willingness to speak out in favor of democratic reform. The GOJ will continue to coordinate its Burma policy with ASEAN nations and with India, Mizukoshi said. He encouraged the USG to also engage closely with India. Charge responded that Under Secretary Burns would be raising Burma when he traveled to

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India next week. She expressed confidence that the neighbors

would urge reform and openness in their own ways.

18. (C) Comment: Japan has received our message that we desire closer coordination regarding our Burma policy. They will stick to the quiet path, however. When asked whom Japanese officials should meet during visits to Rangoon (they generally meet only with regime officials), the Charge suggested NLD always welcomed visitors. Mizukoshi clearly indicated Japan was not ready to go that far. Hopefully we can keep them pushing quietly behind the scenes while others take a more active role. End Comment.

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